

BHAS EAST SHEEN ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER

News and Information for BHAS Allotment Plot holders...



Open Day 2018... Hold the date..

Sunday 13 May 2018 is the Allotment Open Day!

Why not get your family and friends together and come along to join the allotment community for a drink and a barbecue lunch?

There will be all the usual fun, including:

- BBQ
- Plant Sale
- Cakes & Preserves
- Raffle
- Activities for Children
- Trading Shed

When: Sunday 13 May, 2018, from noon to 3pm

Where: Hertford Avenue SW14 – entrance gates, opposite Richmond Park Academy

BHAS Committee News:

Winter on the allotments is a time to lay the foundations for the coming year, with paths and boundaries being redone, compost and manure dug in and planting plans drawn up.

It is the same for your Allotment Society Committee, we have also been planning for the year ahead. Please note the following dates in your diary for 2018:

Allotment Open Day Sunday 13th May

BHAS Annual General Meeting Saturday 16th June

Allotment Annual Show Sunday 2nd September

Plot holder survey

The Committee is planning to send out a survey to all plot holders in the near future, to help improve our communications with members and encourage wider involvement.

We want to know your thoughts on how to improve our precious allotments.

Watch this space to get involved.....*John Padgett (Chair)*

Committee Vacancies:



Your Committee needs you....

Due to a number of resignations the BHAS Committee has vacancies for the following roles:

1. **Allotment Secretary** - previously done as a job share. The role of the Allotment Secretary is crucial in the management of waiting lists, the inspection process and liaison with site reps and the Council Allotment Officer.
2. **Newsletter Editor** - This role is very important for the flow of communication between plot holders and the committee. The Newsletter is published 3 times a year. The Editor is also responsible for publicity.
3. **Social Secretary and Events co-ordinator** - Organising and helping out at BHAS events.
4. **Site Reps on Priory** - An important role on the allotments is that of Site Rep. These are the people who you get to know best on the Committee and their key role is to act as a channel of communication between all plot holders and the Committee. As large plots are gradually split into smaller units (as per the current Council policy) the role of the Site Rep has become more demanding. Our largest Site - Priory has approaching 90 plot holders so the committee has decided to add one additional site rep to the 2 existing roles, giving each Rep responsibility for circa 30 plot holders each, similar to the other Sites on our Allotments. Priory plot holders who would like to volunteer as a Site Rep please get in touch.

Should anyone like more information about the volunteer roles listed please email John Padgett.

Trading Shed News:



There are still plenty of onions and shallots, both red and white in stock. Plant them now! A few varieties of potato are still available - there is no need to **chit** them as they are ready to plant.

*(It's vital with earlies and a good idea with main crops to **chit** the seed **potatoes** first before planting; this means allowing them to start sprouting shoots. Stand them rose end up (the rose end is the one with the most small dents in the skin, or 'eyes') in egg boxes or similar in a light, frost-free place.)*

We hope to have tomato planters (grow bags) in the shed by the 7th April.

Shed opening times: Every weekend until May between 11-12. From May the 5th open alternate Saturdays and Sundays.

Mark Gourlay - Trading Shed Manager

Growing Inspiration and Allotment Ideas:

National Gardening Week, from 30 April to 6 May 2018:

This annual event, now in its 7th year, is scheduled later than usual in order to take advantage of the better weather, longer daylight and additional spring growth. This year's theme is "Share your passion for plants" to encourage all gardeners to share their love of gardening and plants. Visit www.nationalgardeningweek.org.uk for ideas on how to take part and organise activities.

RHS Flower Shows 2018:

London Orchid Show and Plant Fair - 5-7 April

Chelsea - 22-26 May

Hampton Court – 2-8 July

London Plant and Art Fair – 10-12 July

Wisley – 4-9 September

Harvest Festival at Lindley Hall – 2-3 October

RHS London Urban Garden Show – 26-28 October

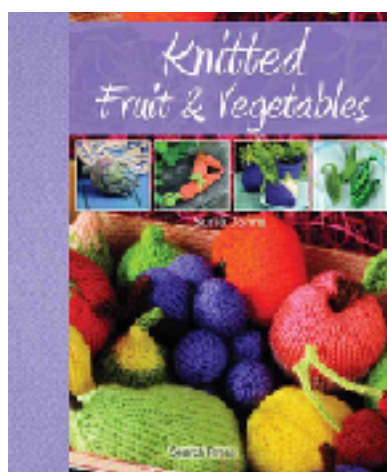
How cool is your allotment?

Check out this book on cool allotments around the world and see how yours compares..

The book takes a look at allotments and community gardens from all walks of life: from the historic [Edgbaston Guinea Gardens](#) in Birmingham, the [hortillonnages](#) or floating gardens in Amiens to an artist's rooftop garden in Brussels. Themes include Historic, A Feast of Flowers, Community, Growing inside the Box, Edible Jungle, Food from Home, By Water, Fruit and a Quick Getaway.

My Cool Allotment: an inspirational guide to stylish allotments and community gardens by Lia Leendertz and Mark Diacono

Pavilion Publishers. ISBN: 9781862059665 Price: £14.99



If you want a change from growing then knit your fruit and vegetables...a superb way to get your children involved and maybe knit something for the Annual Show!

Check out this book by Susie Johns - Knitted fruit and Vegetables.

Search Press Ltd ISBN: 9781844487554 Price £18.99

Letter to Allotment Holders from Janet Bostock**(BHAS Membership Secretary)**

Vacating a plot: When a plot holder leaves the plot they are given time to remove their tools and any equipment belonging to them. Sometimes a plot holder no longer needs their tools and they are left behind on the plot or in a shed. These are then part of the plot and available to the new plot holder. They should NOT be taken by any other plot holder.

Thefts: Thefts have been reported on Priory and Hertford. Please be alert to strangers and any unusual activity. Always lock the gate when entering or leaving the site. Get to know your neighbours so that we all recognise who should be on site. Report any thefts to your site rep so that we know the extent of the problem.

Tree Surgery: The tree surgeon has recently done work on Priory and Hertford. This is expensive work, paid for by BHAS, out of membership money. Please note all plot holders should prune any trees they have planted themselves.

Ash Seedlings: Ash seeds grow easily. Please dig them out if you see them on your plot BEFORE the root is deep and difficult to remove.

Compost: The Society has arranged for deliveries of compost from Richmond Park. The compost will be put into the bay near the wood chip. It is good compost but please take only one wheelbarrow full for your personal use to allow other plot holders to have a share. Hopefully these will be regular deliveries.

Bluebells as weeds - gardening advice: Janet Bostock

Although the native English bluebell and the larger Spanish bluebell are often grown in gardens, they can multiply and become a nuisance. Spanish bluebells can also hybridise with the native form so are best controlled in gardens especially when close to woodlands where the English bluebell is growing.

It is best to **dig out** bluebells while they are in leaf, as the bulbs are almost impossible to find when the plants are dormant:

Loosen soil around the bulbs to a good depth and remove all the bulbs and underground runners. Where shoots appear from underground runners among clumps of low-growing garden plants, carefully insert a garden fork to its full depth close to the shoot. Work the handle of the fork to loosen the bulb then, grasping the shoot, gently ease the bulb out of the earth.

Caution: do not dispose of bulbs by adding them to the garden compost heap and never discard unwanted bulbs in the countryside. Consign them to a black plastic sack and leave for a year before composting.

Chemical controls: Bluebells are strongly resistant to weedkillers and it appears that no garden weedkiller will kill them or even check their growth. [RHS](#)

Bluebells: The survival battle of Britain's native bluebells

By Hannah Briggs BBC News

*"The UK's woodlands are home to almost 50% of the global population of our native bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*). With its unique scent and the very delicate form and structure of the flowers, it is an extremely special flower, say experts"*

Follow this link to read this article online: [BBC News](#)

Identify Native or Spanish Bluebells:

The Spanish Bluebell, commonly grown in our gardens, is more vigorous than our native species and can crossbreed with the native to create a fertile hybrid.



Spanish bluebell © Christina Hart-Davies Native bluebell © Christina Hart-Davies

Crossbreeding dilutes the unique characteristics of our native Bluebell.

In a recent study, conducted by Plantlife volunteers across the UK, one in six broadleaved woodlands surveyed were found to contain the hybrid or Spanish Bluebell. Noticeable differences between the two are as follows:

Native bluebells...

- have narrow leaves, usually about 1cm or 1.5cm (about half an inch) wide
- have deep blue (sometimes white, rarely pink), narrow, tube-like flowers, with the very tips curled right back
- have flowers mostly on one side of the stem only, and distinctly drooping, or nodding, at the top

- have a distinct, sweetish scent
- Inside the flowers, the anthers with the pollen are usually cream

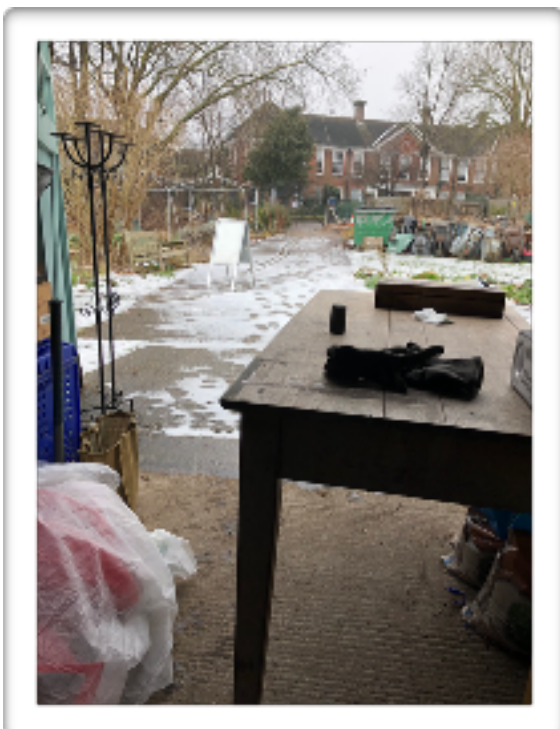
Spanish bluebells...

- have broad leaves often 3cm (over an inch) wide
- have paler blue (quite often pink and white ones too), conical or bell-shaped flowers that have spread-out tips and almost no scent
- have flowers all round the upright stem
- Inside the flowers, the anthers with the pollen is usually blue

Hybrids between these two are very common, with a whole range of intermediate characters. The hybrids are often abundant in gardens and in woods near to urban areas.

Ref: [Plantlife](#)

East Sheen Allotments in the Snow- Photos by Sheena Clark



Committee Contacts:

Chair: John Padgett

Allotment Secretaries: **Vacancy**

Membership Secretary: Janet Bostock

Treasurers: Sophie & Alistair Kennedy

Minutes: Sheena Clark

Events Organiser: **Vacancy**

Newsletter Editor: **Vacancy**

Trading Shed Manager: Mark Gourlay

Site Reps:

Hertford - Derek Lawrence-Brown

Hertford (Beverley Brook) - Janet Bostock

Palewell Park - Paul Edelin

Palewell Fields/Pavilion - David Abel

Priory - **John Padgett will make a statement to plot holders about vacancies**

Triangle - John Bentham

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Editor: Brenda Lattimer

This will be my last newsletter as Editor. I hope you have found the newsletter useful and interesting.

For Contact details please see the Newsletter emailed to BHAS members.